DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 075 263 24 SE 016 120

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TITLE	A Guide to Environmental Study Areas of the Snake River Region. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Idaho Coll., Caldwell.
SPONS AGENCY	National Center for Educational Research and Development (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C. Regional Research Program.
BUREAU NO	BR-1-J-033
PUB DATE	Jan 73
CONTRACT	OEC-X-71-0017(059)
NOTE	16p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Environmental Education; *Evaluation; Natural Resources; Outdoor Education; *Projects; *Reports; *Resource Guides
IDENTIFIERS	Idaho

ABSTRACT

In 1968, a project sponsored by the Caldwell, Idaho School District 132 and funded under an ESEA Title III grant, resulted in a 224-page sourcebook for teachers, "Idaho, An Outdoor Classroom" (ED 046 963). A current project, summarized in this final report, has attempted (1) to evaluate "Idaho, An Outdoor Classroom" and find out if and how it has been used, and (2) to revise and expand the sourcebook to make it more useful. The report describes how the evaluation was completed--through questionnaires, personal visits, and telephone calls. Statistics relative to the questionnaire are tabulated and explained. Revision and expansion of the sourcebook were completed with the assistance of many resource people throughout the state. Corrections, eliminations, and revisions of material from the original book were made and coverage was extended to the entire Snake River Basin, including western Wyoming, northern Nevada, eastern Oregon, and southeastern Washington. Additional items in the report include comments from the evaluators (teachers) and a copy of the evaluation form. (BL)

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Final Report

Project No. OE-1-J-033
Contract No. OEC-X-71-0017(059)

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A GUIDE TO ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY AREAS OF THE SNAKE RIVER REGION

January 1973

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARD

Office of Education

National Center for Educational Research and Development

(Regional Research Program)

SE 016 120

ABSTRACT

The two purposes of this project were:

1. To evaluate Idaho An Outdoor Classroom, a sourcebook prepared for Idaho teachers in 1968 under Title III ESEA and find out if and how it had been used.

2. To revise and expand the sourcebook to make it more useful.

Evaluation was accomplished by distribution of questionnaires to teachers known to have received the book in 1968-69, personal visits and phone calls. Results showed that the book had been helpful and was used in varying degrees and ways by teachers 1 - 12 and many suggestions regarding additional material were made.

Revision and expansion was accomplished by the director drawing on the resources of the Regional Studies Center, faculty and students of the College of Idaho, and resource people throughout the region. Some material from the original book was deleted, introductory material was rewritten, 21 field trip guides were revised and 32 new ones were added. Geographically, coverage was extended to the entire Snake River Basin, including western Wyoming, northern Nevada, eastern Oregon and southeast Washington. The material -- 244 typed pages and maps -- has been submitted to two publishers and is currently under consideration.

Although not included with this report, copies of the manuscript have been sent to John Bean, Director of Educational Research, U.S. Office of Education, Seattle, Washington.

Final Report

Project No. OE-1-J-033
Contract No. OEC-X-71-0017(059)

A GUIDE TO ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY AREAS OF THE SNAKE RIVER REGION

Donna L. Parsons

College of Idaho

Caldwell, Idaho

January 1973

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education
National Center for Educational Research and Development

INTRODUCTION:

In 1968, Donna Parsons directed a project funded under Title III ESEA sponsored by School District 132 (Caldwell, Idaho) which resulted in a 224-page sourcebook for teachers, IDAHO, AN OUTDOOR CLASSROOM. This publication included tour guides, road logs, maps and materials to assist teachers in planning outdoor activities such as field trips and school ground tours.

Eight thousand copies were printed, and as all costs were paid by the grant, these were distributed with no charge to all elementary teachers, social studies and science teachers of the state. Additional copies were given to those who requested them both in and out of the state until the supply was exhausted.

Distribution of the book accomplished the primary objective of the original proposal, which was "to prepare and distribute material to teachers of the state", and many favorable comments about the book have been received. However, as Mrs. Parsons returned to teaching at the end of the project, no evaluation was made of the other objectives which were:

1. To get teachers to use the material to bring the students face-to-face with certain features of their environment.

2. To stimulate teachers to search out new resources themselves for their own use and for sharing with others.

So a new project was proposed with the following objectives:

1. Evaluation of the sourcebook, IDAHO, AN OUTDOOR CLASSROOM to find (a) if it was being used by teachers, what information was most helpful and how it might be expanded and improved; (b) whether teachers had developed such information themselves as a result of the book's example.

2. Revision of the sourcebook -- correction, elimination and clarification, with addition of new material, and expansion to include western Wyoming, northern Nevada and Utah, eastern Oregon and Washington -- the entire Snake River Region, and expansion into other subject areas such as history, ethnology and

sociology, and getting it ready for publication.

PROCEDURE:

Although the research to achieve the 2 objectives listed above was carried on simultaneously, it involved 2 different procedures so each will be described separately.

Evaluation:

Since the original proposal was based on the assumption that the book had indeed proved helpful to teachers, the primary purpose of the evaluation was not to secure numerical data but to elicit suggestions for making the book more useful. A record had been kept of teachers who had received the sourcebook.

Fifteen hundred questionnaires were distributed throughout the state by mail and by personal visits (see appendix for copy of the questionnaire). This was supplemented by numerous phone calls to superintendents and principals throughout the state. The results were tabulated in various ways and are listed in the appendix. However, of more importance than straight statistics were the comments and suggestions (see appendix).

Revision and Expansion:

Revision and expansion was carried out with the assistance of many people throughout the region. A committee of teachers assisted the director in planning and in revising the original book. Dr. Merle Wells, director of the Idaho Historical Society, corrected all historical items, dates, names and places in the book. Field checking of road logs was done by the director and others.

Additional material: Mrs. Parsons is also director of the Regional Studies Center, one purpose of which is to gather information about all aspects of the environment of the Snake River Basin. A great deal of material was gathered in this way. Also files from the previous project were used as deemed desirable. Students and teachers of the region were hired to supply road logs of selected areas, and descriptive material on special topics such as geology and ecology of the region.

A great deal of historical information was supplied by the United States Forest Service from an inventory of the White Clouds-Sawtooth area. The director traveled to Wyoming, eastern Idaho, Oregon, Washington and northern Idaho to secure information and mileage for road logs.

RESULTS:

Evaluation

While the total number of returns was small (510), the number of school districts represented in the final tabulation gave a good sample with 62 represented out of 92 contacted. (This is out of a total of 114 district in Idaho.) Even though results of the questionnaires were tabulated, and totals are available for each category (see appendix), this description will emphasize comparisons and patterns rather than absolute figures or percentages.

One result of the survey was the finding that there is a large turnover of teachers in Idaho. During the 4 years elapsing between distribution of the book and evaluation, many teachers either left teaching entirely, or moved from one school to another. Thus it was impossible to get returns from all of them. Also, it was discovered that distribution of the book was not complete and some of the teachers contacted had never received copies.

As far as geographic distribution goes, more responses were received from Region 2. This was not surprising because of the following:

1. This is the area in which the College and the original project are located so there was more distribution of the book, and more contact and distribution of the questionnaire.

2. This region has the highest population in the state and hence more teachers.

Many questionnaires were only partially completed, so the following comments should be read with this in mind.

Grade level: The majority of the teachers responding (almost 50%) taught grades 4-6. This is probably because primary distribution was to elementary teachers, and because Idaho history is taught in the 4th grade. Except for teachers of grades 1-3 who reported little use, 2/3 or more of the teachers reporting used the book in their classrooms. All but one of the teachers of grades 7-9 indicated the book was appropriate for their grade level, while the figure was 67% for grades 4-6 and 10-12 and only 34% for grades 1-3. There was no difference according to grade level as to how the book fit with other curriculum materials, as a resource for their own information or its use for field trips with students or family. The majority of teachers at all grade levels used it for student field trips, and over 95% used it for field trips with their families.

Teaching Experience: The majority of teachers responding had taught more than 7 years but the number of years of experience didn't seem to make any difference in the kind of response.

Number of Years Lived in Idaho: Teachers who had lived in Idaho less than 3 years showed the lowest use while those who had lived here over 10 years had the highest percentage of use; otherwise there was no difference in response.

Items: On the last half of the questionnaire regarding specific items such as introductory materials, maps, sketches, photographs, etc., there was no difference in response according to grade level, years of experience or years lived in Idaho. There were few responses suggesting that materials were "not applicable" or "should be eliminated".

Not all questionnaires were completed but the majority of the response in the 2nd half indicated that the material was "useful as is" or "should be expanded". Items receiving the most requests for expansion were animals of the region, sketches of plants and animals, photographs, bird lists and description of flowers and trees. Some checked that every item should be expanded.

General: Some teachers also reported for their colleagues (who didn't respond) by a comment such as "our third and fourth grade teachers used it quite a bit". Several included suggestions about specific features or locations that should be included. Others said that they had had copies at one time but had loaned or lost them. Others stated they used it frequently for family trips. One said, "My son used it for an eighth grade report. He liked it." It was evident that there was a misunderstanding of the purpose of the book by some teachers for several mentioned that it was too advanced for fourth graders. The materials was not intended for the use of the students, but rather as a resource book for the teachers.

There was no evidence that teachers had developed similar material because of the book's example. This could be taken as confirmation of one premise of the original project -- that teachers don't have time or resources to search out such material on their own.

Revision and Expansion

The introduction was completely revised beginning with a description of the entire Snake River Basin, including a detailed geology and a complete description of the ecology of the region.

23 field trips from the original book were revised and updated. 30 new field trips were written including several in western Wyoming, one in Nevada, and several in eastern Oregon and Washington.

CONCLUSIONS:

Evaluation

1. Response from the questionnaire and personal interviews indicates that the original sourcebook was widely used by teachers in the classrooms, as a guide for field trips, and for family trips.

2. While coverage of most items in the original sourcebook was considered to be adequate there were requests for more coverage of plants and animals. No attempt was made to expand this coverage however as there are many other publications which cover these adequately.

3. There were many individual requests for inclusion of more historical materials so an effort was made to incorporate such material where possible.

Revision and Expansion

The material is now complete and ready to be published. Contact has been made with two publishers, and while they both indicate interest, no definite committment has yet been obtained (see appendix for letters to Binford and Mort and Caxton Publishing Co.).

COMMENTS FROM IAOC EVALUATIONS

1. I have used all of the above areas as teacher resource units, but wish more of the material was written at a fourth grade level so the students could use the books somewhat independently.

2. (Sketches of plants & animals) -- need state flower, bird, etc.
(Fungi of Owyhee County) -- should be for state.

3. Not applicable to fifth grade except the geology sections. However, it is necessary to keep the guide up to date and information current.

4. (sources of materials) -- include addresses.

5. We need a format more applicable to primary level.

6. Field trip guides could be expanded much more. I think each district should be enlightened to the different trips that could be made in their own area. Being from S. Idaho I feel there are many things left out that are much better than those listed in the manual. If there could be a comprehensive study in each area, there wouldn't need to be such extensive travel to enjoy the same things as there are in other areas a greater distance away.

For example, Bear Lake County has Minnatonka Cave (one of the best in the country for all the different formations, and a bus can drive to the mouth of the cave.) Bear Lake, the Ice Caves, Bloomington Lake (by hike), three of the most beautiful campground in the state, and the historical Mormon Tabernacle. I'm sure each district could contribute to making a more complete trip guide available to the school and people of the state.

7. Are there plans to include more from the eastern region? The fellows you might contact for the Wyoming border information are Fred and Chester Miller or Dale Price.

Are folks willing to share fossil and rock digging site information? An extensive listing might be of value to incorporate a "find" experience into the usual field trip format.

8. Include Malad. Malad has a colorful history of the early settlers going along the Oregon Trail into California - Oregon - Washington. It gets its name from a French group who drank water from a stream and became sick -- "malady" sickness -- also the Mormon religious group came from Salt Lake.

Chief Pocatello made visits from Pocatello to Malad -- we also have a Malad River

9. Bear Lake County left out.

10. This material could be updated as to current situation.

11. For my area of teaching there isn't enough detail for our area here in American Falls.

12. I enjoyed the book myself but felt it was mature for 4th grade level. Also it rather excluded my own southern Idaho area in any detail, but I did use parts of it with adaptation to grade level.

13. I think a little more about birds, plants and animals would help on this level (4th).

14. I feel the binding could be better so a teacher isn't afraid to let the kids use it.

I would like to you include more drawings of the wild flowers.

How about telling us where to pick huckleberries?

Plants for survival might be included. We have a lot of lost people in Idaho. Educating the children might save a life.

15. Believe since this was printed, the STATESMAN had had "suggested tours" sketched. Believe this was while Louise Shattuck was still in the office in Boise. Might prints of these be available to be added?

16. More of the accurate history of some of the places and events would be of excellent help.

17. Materials on Idaho are so scarce

18. As added areas I suggest the area south of Marsing to the Squaw Creek Canyon, Rocky Canyon north of Boise and Cottonwood Creek.

19. Could use more in Caldwell - Nampa area.

20. (hand-drawn road trip maps) -- good, give historical markings.

21. One thing I noticed in your book when reading it -- you bring out lots of science, which is good. I wish you had more historical facts and especially on the field trips.

Check the data on the first town in Idaho -- Preston (as in book) or Franklin - 1860 - as according to Wells and Beal (14 families).

22. It would be most helpful to me to have more in depth material pertaining to this area (Canyon & Owyhee). Identification, etc. of the region's flora, fauna and geographical features.

23. Vocabulary too advanced for 4th -- especially as regards geographic and land form terminology.

24. More stories of the regions, perhaps of pioneer days would be helpful.

25. A possible expansion for particular areas -- i.e. Boise Valley, Magic Valley, Northern Idaho and similar type areas -- a localized unit.

26. What about additional historical aspects?

Section II) -- trail maps (Section III) -- Color photos

27. I did have some difficulty following directions and locating places on some of the Owyhee County trips.

28. I would like to know more about Lizzard Butte. Being able to relate earth changes (volcanoes, etc.) to the child's experiences is valuable.

29. Expansion on the Owyhee section, especially the country surrounding Bruneau and Grandview. The physical and historical geology materials both should be emphasized.

30. I would like to see more of the historic geology and how certain landforms came to be.

31. I especially like the way the book is organized, and the directions and mileage given to find a certain place.

32. Date Henry's Fort was built -- 1809 (as in book) or 1810 (as in a history book).

33. Other ideas for children's activities and fieldtrips can be obtained from Audubon flannel board stories and pamphlets which you may already know. I have a few of these and one or two made up if you would like to see them. (Louise Tucker)

34. Color pictures.

35. More specific on interest areas -- Syringa, Camas

36. Would be great to have more outdoor tours.

37. How about field trips for physics or chemistry classes.

38. Increase the size of the map on p. 19.

39. Would like more infomation about Cascade, Warm Lake, Yellow Pine area.

SUMMARY

DATA SHEET

QUESTIONNAIRE ON IDAHO: AN OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

CATEGORY OF RESPONDENT _____

	Grade	teaching experience	years in IDaho
1-3	110	1-3 36	1-3 14
4-6	192	4-6 52	4-6 24
7-9	54	7-9 58	7-9 12
10-12	22	10-12 50	10+ 316
other	20	12+ 172	

Question	yes	no	?	other
1	178	114		
2A	230	52	10	
B	166	106	14	
C	234	50		
3A	302	4		
B	56	198	8	
C	180	62	2	
D	250	36	2	
E	286	12		

	useful as is	should be expanded	not familiar w/ item	not applicable	should be eliminated
A	160	60			
B	150	50			
C	116	84			
D	120	70			
E	90	102			
A	100	74		6	
B	104	84		6	
C	110	66		6	
D	100	98		4	
A	102	118			
B	96	120			
C	102	108			
D	90	114			
E	82	76		8	4
A	100	80		6	2
B	104	84		2	
C	90	86		2	
D	104	80			
E	114	66		3	

ITEM

I. Introductory Material
   - A. sources of material
   - B. public lands
   - C. geology and geography
   - D. vegetation zones
   - E. animals of the region

II. Maps
   - A. landform maps
   - B. place-name maps
   - C. formal maps
   - D. hand-drawn road trip maps

III. Special Function Materials
   - A. sketches of plants and animals
   - B. photographs
   - C. bird lists
   - D. descriptions of flowers and trees
   - E. fungi of Owyhee County

IV. Study Aids
   - A. schoolground tours
   - B. study trip guide (at end of book)
   - C. study questions
   - D. Forest Service materials
   - E. bibliography and references

January 23, 1973

COPY

Mr. Tom Binford
Binfords and Morts
2505 SE 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97242

Dear Mr. Binford:

I have recently completed revision and expansion of Idaho, An Outdoor Classroom which was printed in 1968 under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education. The revision and expansion was also supported, in part, by a USOE grant and consists of over 45 field trips, road logs and descriptive articles on the Snake River Region. It covers western Wyoming, northern Nevada, eastern Oregon, a small part of southeastern Washington and most of Idaho.

If you are interested in publishing this material in any form, would you please let me know at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Donna Parsons
Director

DP:ph

January 23, 1973

Mr. Gordon Gipson, Editor
The Caxton Printers, Ltd.
Caldwell, Idaho

COPY

Dear Gordon:

I have recently completed revision and expansion of Idaho, An Outdoor Classroom which was printed in 1968 under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education. The revision and expansion was also supported, in part, by a USOE grant and consists of over 45 field trips, road logs and descriptive articles on the Snake River Region. It covers western Wyoming, northern Nevada, eastern Oregon, a small part of southeastern Washington and most of Idaho.

Distribution of the 8000 copies of the original volume, printed at government expense, was primarily to the 5000 elementary teachers and secondary science teachers in Idaho. The remaining copies went, at no cost, to college teachers, agency personnel, youth leaders, and others from all over the U.S. who requested it. I have an incomplete list of names and addresses of those ho received the book and school districts to which they were distributed.

As a part of the recent revision, I sent questionnaires to many teachers to find out if they had used the book, what changes or additions they would like, and if there was any demand for a new edition. I tried to meet their requests for more history and wider coverage. The feedback I've gotten indicates a big enough demand to justify a new edition, and I hope something can be worked out to get it on the market.

In its present form, the individual segments run from one to eight typewrittenppages. It would require some re-writing and condensation to fit into a format like that of Oregon for the Curious, but this would be possible. While such a publication might have more appeal to the general public, it would not be av valuable to teachers as the longer form.

But I'll be glad to show you the revised material and discuss any possibilities for getting it into print.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Donna Parsons
Director

DP:ph

COPY

EVALUATION OF

IDAHO: AN OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Name _____

School _____ School District No. _____

School address _____

Grade or subject _____

Number of years lived in Idaho _____

Number of years of teaching experience _____

(Circle the appropriate response to the questions. Y is yes, N is No.)

Y N 1. Did you use the book in your class(es)?

2. Did you find this book to be:

Y N A. Pertinent to your local area?

Y N B. Appropriate for your grade level?

Y N C. Designed to fit conveniently with other curricula materials?

3. Do you feel that this book may be used profitably in your curriculum as a:

Y N A. Resource for your own information?

Y N B. Workbook for your students?

Y N C. Source of methods or processes of study?

Y N D. Guide for field trips with students?

Y N E. Guide for your own field trips (with your family)?

Assuming that the responses indicate that this book has been worthwhile for teachers, we also need to know which parts of the book are satisfactory, which parts need to be expanded, and which parts are superfluous. For each item below, please indicate whether you feel the item should be retained, expanded, or eliminated by writing the letter of the item in the appropriate column.

useful as is	should be expanded	not familiar w/ item	not applicable	should be eliminated	ITEM
					I. Introductory Material
					A. sources of material
					B. public lands
					C. geology and geography
					D. vegetation zones
					E. animals of the region
					II. Maps
					A. landform maps
					B. place-name maps
					C. formal maps
					D. hand-drawn road trip maps
					III. Special Function Materials
					A. sketches of plants and animals
					B. photographs
					C. bird lists
					D. descriptions of flowers and trees
					E. fungi of Owyhee County
					IV. Study Aids
					A. schoolground tours
					B. study trip guide (at end of book)
					C. study questions
					D. Forest Service materials
					E. bibliography and references

Comments: Please write any additional comments or suggestions on the back.

RETURN TO: Donna Parsons, The College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho 83605